

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A kit for making or assembling a ready-to-eat deep dish pizza, said kit comprising an outer carton; pizza compartments comprising a plurality of farinaceous baked, yeast raised, deep dish pizza crusts, a pizza sauce, a first topping comprising a cheese topping, and a second topping selected from the group consisting of an additional cheese topping and a non-cheese topping; the plurality of baked, yeast raised, deep dish pizza crusts being nested together; wherein the pizza components are independently sealed in individual pouches; wherein each of the pizza crusts has water activity in a range of about 0.90 to about 0.95; wherein the pizza crust has slanted side walls to allow nesting of the pizza crusts; wherein each pizza crust maintains its water activity in range of about 0.90 to about 0.95 throughout a shelf life of the kit of at least 75 days; and wherein the pizza crust is prepared from a pizza dough comprising, in baker's percentages, about 100 pounds of flour, about 5.0 to about 15.0 pounds sweetener, about 7.5 to about 17.5 pounds butter chips, about 1.5 to about 3.5 pounds salt, about 1.0 to about 2.25 pounds dough relaxer, about 0.5 to about 5.0 pounds yeast, about 1.0 to about 6.0 pounds shortening, 0.4 to about 2.0 pounds monoglycerides and diglycerides, about 0 to about 2.0 pounds dried egg whites, about 0 to about 0.5 pounds sodium stearoyl lactylate, about 0 to about 0.5 pounds calcium propionate, about 0.2 to about 0.4 pounds alpha amylase enzyme, about 0 to about 0.3 pounds guar gum, about 53 to about 63 pounds water, and about 0 to about 1.0 pounds spices and seasonings; and wherein the kit does not contain an anti-fogging agent.

2. The kit as defined in claim 1, wherein the individual pouches are hermetically sealed.

3. The kit as defined in claim 2, wherein each of the individual pouches is capable of withstanding substantial atmospheric pressure variations while remaining hermetically sealed.

4. The kit as defined in claim 3, wherein said second topping comprises a proteinaceous food product.

5. The kit as defined in claim 4, wherein each pouch is sealed under an inert atmosphere or under inert gas flushed conditions.

6. The kit as defined in claim 5, wherein the components are arranged in layer within the outer carton.

7. The kit as defined in claim 6, further comprising a carrier to stabilize the contents, said carrier having legs to support one or more components above one or more other components without compressing said one or more other components.

8. The kit as defined in claim 1, wherein the first topping is a cheese selected from the group consisting of mozzarella, Parmesan, Romano, Swiss, cheddar, Monterey jack and Gruyere.

9. The kit as defined in claim 8, wherein the second topping is selected from the group consisting of mozzarella cheese, Romano cheese, Parmesan cheese, Swiss cheese, cheddar cheese, Monterey jack cheese, Gruyere cheese, pepperoni, sausage including Italian and Polish sausage,

cooked ground beef, cooked ham and bacon, Canadian bacon, bacon bits artificial bacon flavored bits, olives, peppers, onions, anchovies, shrimp, and crab.

10. The kit as defined in claim 1, wherein the first topping is mozzarella cheese and the second topping is pepperoni.

11. The kit as defined in claim 1, wherein the water activity of the pizza crusts is about 0.93.

12. The kit as defined in claim 1, wherein the pizza crust is prepared from a pizza dough comprising, in baker's percentages, about 100 pounds of flour, about 8.0 to about 12.0 pounds sweetener, about 10.5 to about 14.5 pounds butter chips, about 2.0 to about 3.0 pounds salt, about 2.0 to about 2.25 pounds dough relaxer, about 2.5 to about 3.5 pounds yeast, about 2.0 to about 4.0 pounds shortening, 0.5 to about 1.5 pounds monoglycerides and diglycerides, about 0.75 to about 1.5 pounds dried egg whites, about 0.4 to about 0.5 pounds sodium stearoyl lactylate, about 0.4 to about 0.5 pounds calcium propionate, about 0.3 to about 0.35 pounds alpha amylase enzyme, about 0.15 to about 0.25 pounds guar gum, about 54 to about 60 pounds water, and about 0.3 to about 0.4 pounds spices and seasonings.

13. A fully or partially baked, deep dish pizza crust comprising a base layer and outwardly slanted side walls completely around the base layer to form nestable deep dish pizza crust; wherein the fully or partially baked, deep dish pizza crust has a water activity of about 0.9 to about 0.95; wherein the fully or partially baked, deep dish pizza crust is prepared from a pizza dough comprising, in baker's percentages, about 100 pounds of flour, about 5.0 to

about 15.0 pounds sweetener, about 7.5 to about 17.5 pounds butter chips, about 1.5 to about 3.5 pounds salt, about 1.0 to about 2.25 pounds dough relaxer, about 0.5 to about 5.0 pounds yeast, about 1.0 to about 6.0 pounds shortening, 0.4 to about 2.0 pounds monoglycerides and diglycerides, about 0 to about 2.0 pounds dried egg whites, about 0 to about 0.5 pounds sodium stearoyl lactylate, about 0 to about 0.5 pounds calcium propionate, about 0.2 to about 0.4 pounds alpha amylase enzyme, about 0 to about 0.3 pounds guar gum, about 53 to about 63 pounds water, and about 0 to about 1.0 pounds spices and seasonings; wherein the fully or partially baked, deep dish pizza crust maintains its water activity at about 0.9 to about 0.95 when hermetically sealed and stored at refrigeration temperatures, for periods of at least about 75 days; and wherein the kit does not contain an anti-fogging agent.

14. The pizza crust as defined in claim 13, wherein the base layer is a rectangle having a first dimension of about 3.4 to about 3.6 in., a second dimension of about 3.4 to about 3.6 in., and a thickness of about 5 to about 9 mm; wherein the side walls have a thickness of about 5 to about 9 mm and a height of about 1.5 to 3.0 in. and form a top rim on the side walls of similar rectangular shape as the base layer and having a first dimension about 4.1 to 4.4 in. longer than the first dimension of the base layer and second dimension about 4.1 to 4.4 in. longer than the second dimension of the base layer.

15. The pizza crust as defined in claim 14, wherein both the base layer and the top rim are essentially square.

16. The pizza crust as defined in claim 13, wherein the pizza crust is prepared from bread dough comprising, in baker's percentages, about 100

pounds flour, about 8.0 to about 12.0 pounds sweetener, about 10.5 to about 14.5 butter chips, about 2.0 to about 3.0 pounds salt, about 2.0 to about 2.25 pounds dough relaxer, about 2.5 to about 3.5 pounds yeast, about 2.0 to about 4.0 pounds shortening, about 0.5 to about 1.5 pounds monoglycerides and diglycerides, about 0.75 to about 1.5 pounds dried egg whites, about 0.4 to about 0.5 pounds sodium stearoyl lactylate, about 0.4 to about 0.5 pounds calcium propionate, about 0.3 to about 0.35 pounds alpha amylase enzyme, about 0.15 to about 0.25 pounds guar gum, about 54 to about 60 pounds water, and about 0.3 to about 0.4 pounds spices and seasonings.

17. The pizza crust as defined in claim 13, wherein the pizza crust is prepared from bread dough comprising, in baker's percentages, about 100 pounds flour, about 10.0 pounds high fructose corn syrup, about 12.5 pounds butter chips, about 2.5 pounds salt, about 2.25 pounds dough relaxer, about 3.0 pounds yeast, about 3.0 pounds soy bean oil, about 1.0 pounds monoglycerides and diglycerides, about 1.0 pound dried egg white, about 0.5 pounds sodium stearoyl lactylate, about 0.45 pounds calcium propionate, about 0.32 pounds alpha amylase enzyme, about 0.22 pounds guar gum, about 54 to about 60 pounds water, and about 0.35 pounds granulated garlic.

18. A kit comprising:

an outer package; and

a farinaceous food product capable of maintaining a soft, chewable texture for an extended shelf life at refrigerated temperatures;

wherein the farinaceous food product is prepared from a dough comprising, in baker's percentages, about 100 pounds of flour, about 5.0 to about 15.0 pounds sweetener, about 7.5 to about 17.5 pounds butter chips,

about 1.5 to about 3.5 pounds salt, about 1.0 to about 2.25 pounds dough relaxer, about 0.5 to about 5.0 pounds yeast, about 1.0 to about 6.0 pounds shortening, 0.4 to about 2.0 pounds monoglycerides and diglycerides, about 0 to about 2.0 pounds dried egg whites, about 0 to about 0.5 pounds sodium stearoyl lactylate, about 0 to about 0.5 pounds calcium propionate, about 0.2 to about 0.4 pounds alpha amylase enzyme, about 0 to about 0.3 pounds guar gum, about 53 to about 63 pounds water, and about 0 to about 1.0 pounds spices and seasonings; wherein the farinaceous food product has a soft texture which can be maintained, when hermetically sealed and stored at refrigeration temperatures, for periods of at least about 75 days; and wherein the kit does not contain an anti-fogging agent.

19. The kit of claim 18, wherein the farinaceous food product includes a base having an outer edge extending thereabout, and include sides extending outwardly and upwardly from the base outer edge for allowing a plurality of food product to be nested.

20. The kit of claim 20, wherein the farinaceous food product is a deep dish pizza crust, and the kit further includes additional pizza components for being placed on the crust with the sides keeping the pizza components in place on the crust.

21. The kit of claim 20, further comprising proteinaceous food products.

22. The kit of claim 20, wherein the additional components are in individual, sealed packages within the outer package.

23. The kit of claim 22, further comprising a container including a beverage therein.